97-84034-11

Curtis, George William

Opening address at the New York meeting, 1874

Cambridge, Mass.

1874

97-84034-11
MASTER NEGATIVE #

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
PRESERVATION DIVISION

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

308
Z
Box 65 Curtis, George William, 1824-1892.
Opening address at the New York meeting, 1874, by George William Curtis. The work of social science in the United States, by F. B. Sanborn. Cambridge, Riverside press, 1874.
15 p. 23 cm.

At head of title: American social science association.

ONLY ED.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: *Reproductions may not be made without permission from Columbia University Libraries.*

TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 11:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 3-3-97 INITIALS: PB

TRACKING # : 21547

FILMED BY PRESERVATION RESOURCES, BETHLEHEM, PA.

Prof. E. R. A. Seligman

American Social Science Association.

OPENING ADDRESS AT THE NEW YORK MEETING, 1874.

308
Z
Box 65

BY

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

THE WORK OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY

F. B. SANBORN.

PRINTED FOR THE AMERICAN SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION,
At the Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass.
1874.

American Social Science Association.

OPENING ADDRESS AT THE NEW YORK MEETING, 1874.

BY

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

THE WORK OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY

F. B. SANBORN.

PRINTED FOR THE AMERICAN SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION,
At the Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass.
1874.

19 Feb. 1920 - C.R.W.

OPENING ADDRESS.

By George William Curtis, Esq., of New York, President of the Association, Tuesday Evening, May 19, 1874.

Ladies and Gentlemen: My duty this evening is very simple and very pleasant, and, you will be glad to know, very brief, for it is to welcome you to the general meeting of the Social Science Association, and, as it were, to say a brief grace over the feast that is spread for you. And, upon your part, as you seat yourselves, you will doubtless say that you are very glad to come to a social science meeting, but that you would like very much to know what social science is. And I again should be very happy if I could answer your question in a word or in a phrase. If I say that by social science we mean the science of society, you will truly reply that I move without advancing; nor, indeed, could I assert that the relations of social phenomena, modified as they perpetually are by the human will, and by almost incalculable conditions, have been reduced to the laws of an exact science, or ever could be. But, undoubtedly, as Mr. Herbert Spencer says, so far as the phenomena of society can be generalized, and interpretation can be based upon this generalization, so far there can be science. The aims of this Society, however, are very practical. It seeks to build a platform upon which an honest and able inquiry can be conducted as to the best methods of advancing in every way the great interests of society. While solitary thinkers everywhere are studying and meditating the great problems of economy and trade and finance, sanitary questions, pauperism and crime, the progress of education, the amendment of laws, the extension of a loftier international comity, the improvement of political methods, and all similar themes, each student's research being a single ray of light, this Society would bring all those scattered rays to a focus, and so illuminate the path of national progress and true glory while in its degree it cheers mankind. All advance from barbarism to civilization is the development of social science. The spirit that seeks higher conditions of life and wider knowledge is its minister. Five hundred years ago, a wise and pious citizen of Florence observed that three times within his remembrance one of the church towers of the city had been struck by lightning, and he thought that he perceived that what was needed for a proper protection was to

place upon the summit of the tower a choice selection of holy relics. Four centuries later Dr. Franklin went out one afternoon, with his kite and key, in the face of a thunder-cloud, and solved the problem. That is the spirit of the student of social science. He is not satisfied with holy relics as a conductor of lightning, and would stimulate the public mind to work with kite and key in the face of the blackest clouds of tradition and ignorance, and solve the problems of the public well-being. But the Association has no other machinery than that which you will see during this meeting — suggestions and discussions by experts and special students. It is now nearly ten years old, and although its work has been very modest, it has enjoyed the sympathy and aid of many of the men most eminent in every branch of its inquiries, and its volumes of transactions, containing the papers that have been read at its meetings, are full of the results of the most advanced observation and thought upon the most important social topics. As an illustration of the subjects of its interest, I may cite one in which I have been myself deeply interested, the reform of the civil service. The Association in some of its earliest meetings, and by the warm urgency of my honored predecessor, Mr. SAMUEL ELIOT, considered this subject, and it is an admirable illustration of the value of this platform. For, unlike the platforms of political parties, which have declared for it, this platform means upon that subject exactly what it says. It is a political subject, but it is in no sense partisan; it is especially patriotic. We have urged, and still urge, it upon the grounds both of the greater efficiency and economy of the service, and the purification of politics which must result. As the great political evil of the times is corruption, every good citizen is morally bound to consider the methods of withstanding it; and as no single practical measure would do so much to remedy that corruption by destroying its machinery and introducing better methods, the reform of the civil service is especially one of the subjects for the consideration of which this Association exists. But I am not to speak to you of these details. The work of social science in the United States will be the subject of a special report on Friday afternoon by Mr. F. B. SANBORN, the Secretary of the Society, a gentleman whose practical acquaintance with that work, and, especially, as former Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Charities, with the great problem of modern corruption, pauperism, and crime, gives authority to every word that he says upon the subject.

While thus, ladies and gentlemen, I bid you the most cordial welcome to this meeting, and to every session of it, I cannot sit down without giving that greeting a tone of sadness by recalling our great co-laborer, first named among the Directors of the Society, full always

of the most zealous interest in its work — Professor AGASSIZ. Had he lived, I doubt not you would have seen him upon this platform this evening, and in that great genial presence how gladly should we have recognized one of the noblest specimens of manhood that this century has seen. Thirty years ago he came to this country, and while as a man of science he was a true citizen of the world, yet he chose America for his home. As Sir Isaac Newton said of Roger Coates, the young astronomer, when he came to Cambridge, "Now the world will know something," it might have been said of AGASSIZ when he came to us, "Now America will learn something!" And how much it learned! Not only in the direct lessons that he taught; not alone in the lecture-room, where, with the ever-young enthusiasm of science and the magnetism of a simple love of truth,

> "His look
> Drew audience and attention still as night
> Or Summer's noontide air."

Not in this way alone, but in his indifference to money-making and his consecration of great powers to great ends, what a lesson he taught of the essential glory of the intellectual life, showing to us, who would hardly have believed it, that a modest scholar and teacher with a heart as large as his brain and a hand as generous as his heart, could live his simple private life and go down to his grave with a national veneration and tender sorrow such as no king in history ever received. He was a teacher, and he teaches still. How well sings his friend and neighbor, Lowell, in that monody which Milton mourning Lycidas would not have disclaimed: —

> "We have not lost him all, he is not gone
> To the dumb herd of them that wholly die;
> The beauty of his better self lives on
> In minds he touched with fire, in many an eye
> He trained to truth's exact severity;
> He was a teacher — why be grieved for him
> Whose living word still stimulates the air?
> In endless file shall loving scholars come
> The glow of his transmitted torch to share,
> And trace his features with an eye less dim
> Than ours whose sense familiar wont makes numb."

THE WORK OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.

A Report by F. B. Sanborn, General Secretary of the Association.
Read May 22, 1874.

Among the adventures which Cervantes ascribes to his famous hero, the Knight of La Mancha, is an encounter with several chevaliers of industry on their way to the galleys, one of whom turns out to be an author. "What is the title of your book?" said the knight to Gines de Passamonte, the autobiographer. "The Life of Gines de Passamonte," was the reply. "And is it finished?" quoth Don Quixote. "How can it be finished?" answered he, "since my life is not yet finished." To report with any completeness on the work of Social Science in our country is more difficult than for a man to complete his own biography, since it is the life of the whole community which he is writing who undertakes to speak of Social Science; and before one event has been recorded a hundred others have taken place. But something may, perhaps, be said within the half hour allotted me to indicate some of the main features and later manifestations of American Social Science.

Do not expect me to define the phrase, however, even negatively, by stating what Social Science is not. I have never seen or heard of a person who could concisely define what it is we call social science, or state wherein it differs from other branches of human knowledge. It seems, indeed, to be neither a science nor an art, but a mingling of the two, or of fifty sciences and arts, which all find a place in it. Whatever concerns mankind in their social, rather than in their individual relations, belongs to this comprehensive abstraction, and social science shades off easily and imperceptibly into metaphysics on one side, philanthrophy on another, political economy on a third, and so round the whole circle of human inquiry. Pope advises us "to grasp the eel of science by the tail." Now to deal with a science so fleeting, so fluctuating, and Protean as this in a country like ours, where everything fluctuates and glides into every other thing, is to grasp the most elusive of eels by the most tantalizing of tails; it slips from our hold and defies all attempts to classify it.

And yet there is social science work to be done; so much of it that

nobody can either do it all or see whether it gets done or not. It is multifarious and endless, like woman's work, of which the saying runs,

> "Man's work lasts from sun to sun,
> But woman's work is never done."

Much of it is literally women's work, and is getting done by them more and more; but there is room enough for all sexes and ages in the field of social science. The harvest is plentiful, or will be, but the laborers are few, and we are seeking to engage more, both for seed-time and for harvest. It is one of our advantages in America that we can plant anew in virgin soil, and are free without effort from many of the weeds that choke the harvest in other countries. But this happy condition does not long continue, and there are already portions of the country where we have in abundance the evils of an old civilization, as well as the crudities and deficiencies of a new one. To avail ourselves of the experience of other countries, without imagining that it strictly applies to our own condition, is the first duty of an American student in social science.

In order to do this, of course we must know what our own condition is; and to those who have not had their attention drawn to the matter, it will be surprising to learn how little we know in America of the actual circumstances of the people. We make great parade from time to time, of the Census tables, the statistical reports from the Treasury Department, the Bureau of Agriculture, etc., and other professed exhibitions of our material condition; but it is only those who know least about the facts who are able to put much trust in these statistics. Even if we have all faith, and can assume them to be true at the time they were taken, the growth and change of the country is such that they are wholly inadequate and misleading a twelve-month afterward. Perhaps others have been more fortunate, but I have never yet seen a statement of the two great crops of the United States, cotton and breadstuffs, made six months after the harvest that seemed to be within ten per cent. of reasonable certainty; and I strove in vain for a year or two to get an estimate worth retaining of another great staple — the stock and increase of horses and cattle. Perhaps you will refer me to the Census tables; but then I should reply, as Sir Robert Walpole did about history, "That I know to be false." The census is "a fable agreed upon," which, again, was Napoleon's definition of history, and one which he did his best to prove just. An American census, in its best estate, is a combination of guesses and mistakes, elaborately computed and selected; and such it must remain until the law is so amended as to allow us to employ the means which experience has shown to be necessary in other countries. We have the satisfaction of knowing, however, that each successive ten years gives us better

guesses and more trustworthy computations, and in several particulars the national Census is still our best authority.

This is especially true in regard to the statistics of birth and death, the collection of which is even yet strangely neglected by most of the State governments, and carefully performed as yet by only five or six, — namely, in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, and one or two of the Western States. Neither of the four greatest States — New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Ohio — have as yet any useful State system of registration. The great cities of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cincinnati all have such a system, and furnish us valuable facts; and the same is true of some of the other large cities in these four States and elsewhere; but among more than half the population of the United States no systematic effort is made to record and report the number of births, deaths, or marriages taking place in a year. Consequently, even the meagre, contradictory, and misleading vital statistics gathered once in ten years by the Census Bureau at Washington become of some value in the absence of others; and the same may be said of many other portions of the decennial reports. But it should be the first effort of all students of social science to make these reports annual, as they are in some European countries, and to promote in each State the inquiries and statistical returns which alone can give a high value to the national census-taking and its published results. Every State should maintain a Statistical Bureau, and that of the nation should be permanent, instead of coming into existence for a few years at a time once in a decade. One of the best statisticians in the country, and perhaps I may say in the world, Dr. Edwin M. Snow, of Rhode Island, in giving reasons, a few years ago, for the creation of a permanent Bureau of General Statistics at Washington, said very truly: —

"The greatest defects in all our censuses have been owing to the want of knowledge and experience in those employed upon them. We are almost destitute of men in this country, except in three or four States, who are familiar with the practical duties required in taking a census. With a corps of clerks educated in the best methods of doing their duties, and with trained men to obtain the information, and by making use of local officers and other sources of information in different States, I am perfectly confident that a permanent census bureau could obtain all the information now obtained by a decennial census, except that relating to population, and could obtain it every year, with no greater expense than is now required to obtain it once in ten years. When such bureaus become general in all the States, the National Government will be able, with their assistance, to obtain all the statistics now obtained by the national census, and much more; far more frequently, far more correctly, and with much less expense."

Such bureaus have been established under various names in Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Missouri, Minnesota, and probably in other States. They have accomplished little as yet, but the near approach of the centennial birthday of the Republic (July 4, 1876) is stimulating the States to make their statistics more complete and exact; and several of them will probably present during the year 1876 a fuller collection of facts of all kinds concerning their population, industries, and social statistics than has ever been seen in this country hitherto. The philosopher in "Gulliver" has given it for his opinion that "whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together." The same praise can be given in a smaller degree, perhaps, to the man who causes two facts to be known and put on record where but one was known before.

Next to the collection of facts comes the dissemination of principles and the practical application of them to the condition of things revealed by statistics. This is the more attractive work and the nobler; but it is less indispensable than the humbler task of the census-taker and the statistician. Rather, perhaps, should it be spoken of as more inevitable; for ideas can no more be avoided than can the change of seasons. But an idea in the wrong place, a notion out of its latitude, a principle inapplicable to the case in hand — these are quite as likely to be hurtful as helpful, while facts and dates never injured anybody undeservedly. Moreover, ideas may be crude and principles can be misunderstood or only half learned, and thence comes much of the mischief in the world; while statistics, however tasteless, can never be poisonous in themselves, it is only when misapplied by imperfect or perverted reasoning that they seem to do harm. Hence, I place as first and most important the collection of facts; next in order comes the combination and application of them. And upon this second branch of social science work, our Association once received some most useful hints from a great man, now dead — the late HORACE GREELEY. At our Albany general meeting, in February, 1869, Mr. Greeley briefly addressed us in words that were then less regarded than they would be now. "The most urgent public need of to-day," he said, "is the careful preparation and cheap publication of a series of larger tracts, embodying all that is known beyond dispute in the domain of natural, intellectual, and moral science; concise but comprehensive treatises on distinct topics of practical consequence." Among these topics, Mr. Greeley enumerated, by way of illustration, ventilation, food, health, habitations, etc., and he closed his short address with a statement embodying his definition of Social Science, — perhaps as good as any we

have heard. After urging that a society should be found or formed "to provide and diffuse such summaries for popular use of elementary, physical, and moral truth," he added that this "would surely and signally conduce to the diffusion of knowledge, virtue, and happiness, — in other words, to the advancement of social science."

No one has yet undertaken precisely this work in America — akin to that which Lord Brougham, the father of the British Social Science Association, labored, along with Mrs. Somerville and others, to promote in Great Britain, forty or fifty years since, under the name of the "diffusion of useful knowledge." Fonblanque and the wits of that time insisted, after some unlucky publications, that Lord Brougham's true mission was either the "confusion of useful knowledge," or the "diffusion of useless knowledge," thus pointing out two of the risks which such an undertaking must encounter. But whatever the risks are, it is one of the most needed functions of social science in America now to perform this work attempted by Brougham and recommended by Greeley. The newspaper can do much in this way, and actually does it, but under some limitations and with some perversions which it is possible to avoid. Probably no one agency in America ever did so much in this way, from 1841 to 1872, as Mr. Greeley's own newspaper; but that did not satisfy its founder, as we saw at Albany. To some extent before 1869, and in a greater degree since, work of this sort has been essayed by public boards of health, charities, education, and the like. The Massachusetts Board of Health, which made its first report in 1870, has devoted five annual volumes to enlightening the public on sanitary topics, and exists mainly for that purpose; the California, Minnesota, and Michigan Boards of Health, in a somewhat different manner, are doing the same thing; the recently appointed Sanitary Commission of New Jersey aims at something of the sort; while the new and vigorous American Public Health Association is engaged in combining the intelligence and activity of sanitarians in all parts of the country in the work of investigating and making public matters of special interest. The ten existing State boards of charities (not all called by that name) publish reports yearly or biennially upon their special topics, some of which — as in New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts — have a value beyond the State in which they are prepared. In summoning conferences of these official boards to be held in connection with our general meeting, the Association hoped to bring together and unite more closely, for research and practical administration, these organizations which exist for the same general purpose. This hope has been amply justified by the sessions of Wednesday and Thursday, which are to be followed hereafter by other conferences, and by united action, so far as that shall be found practicable. In the Wednesday's conference we had delegates or letters of coöperation from seven of the ten boards of State charities now existing, namely: from New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Kansas; and but for the presence of some of these boards at the recent Prison Congress in St. Louis, we should doubtless have seen other States represented. The appointment of committees for future work, and the discussions concerning the insane, the laws of pauper settlement, and the prevention of pauperism, will indicate in part what was done at this conference.

The conference of health boards convened in this Hall yesterday and to-day was invited from similar motives, and has resulted in bringing these important bodies, now rapidly increasing in number and efficiency, into better acquaintance with each other. Methods have been discussed, plans of organization and administration proposed, and the way opened for a more methodical and uniform system of sanitary supervision and vital registration to be introduced and commended to the whole country. Gentlemen representing boards of health in New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Maryland have been present, and each State has contributed its share of information and suggestion. To-day these boards have been in conference also with members of the State boards of charities, the duties of the two organizations often lying parallel, or even intermingling with each other. For example, the California Board of Health exercises a supervision over the State prisons and other public establishments of California; the same, I believe, is the case in Minnesota, and the same arrangement has been proposed, though not yet adopted, in Maryland.

There are other organizations, special or general in their character, with which our Association is cöoperating, so far as practicable; and among these has already been named one of the most recent, — the American Public Health Association, — whose sessions in this city last winter attracted so much notice, and drew out so many able papers and discussions on sanitary topics. An older body of medical men, working in a specialty, which, however, is of universal interest and concern, the American Association of Medical Superintendents of Insane Asylums, includes among its members several of our own number, two or three of whom have met with us here, and more would have done so but for the meeting of their annual conference at Nashville this week.

The National Prison Association, which may be regarded as an offshoot from our own, since it was founded by several of our active members, is engaged in another phase of social science work. It both collects information and promulgates principles, and by its proceedings at Cincinnati, Baltimore, and, last week, at St. Louis, it has exerted a considerable influence in favor of a reform of prison discipline and of criminal

law. We had the pleasure yesterday of welcoming its founder and Secretary (Dr. Wines) to our sessions here. Periodical conventions, like those held by the instructors of the blind, of deaf mutes, etc., are likewise laboring in the same general direction with ourselves, and of late years with increased activity. It has been one of the cherished purposes of our own Association to maintain relations of friendship and mutual assistance with all these special organizations, so far as they will permit us to do so.

It is the practical application of social science, however, which necessarily interests the largest number of our countrymen; and the examples of this are numberless. In every State, and in all parts of the same State, social science work is done by philanthropic men and women, many of whom would be surprised or amused if you told them they were "promoting social science." Like the Frenchman who had been talking prose all his life without suspecting it, they have served the cause of social science while indulging the luxury or performing the thankless tasks of public benevolence. Perhaps the best example of this is one of the most recent — the formation of Training Schools for Nurses in this city, in Boston, Philadelphia, and New Haven, which has been the work of a few ladies in these cities during the year 1873. The enterprise was novel, the difficulties have been great, and are not yet wholly overcome; but a beginning has been made, and now at least fifty women are training themselves by experience as nurses in great hospitals to carry on that profession skillfully in after life. Another work in which women have had a great share has been the improved instruction of deaf mutes by means of articulation, something almost unknown in America eight years ago, when our Association first discussed it, while now there are three or four large schools teaching exclusively in that way, and more than 500 pupils in the whole country who benefit by it. A kindred measure in aid of the blind is that for cheap and improved printing in the raised alphabet, which has been lately brought to the notice of our Association by Mr. Stephen P. Ruggles, an inventor and practical printer, who offers to establish and maintain a printing-house for the blind at his own expense. A committee of the Association, of which President Eliot, of Harvard University, is a member, is now considering the feasibility of putting the plan in operation at Boston. Other practical measures which might be mentioned, are the establishment of special prisons for women in Indiana and Massachusetts; co-operative building companies for enabling the poor to build and own their own homes, which our former Vice-President, Mr. Quincy, of Boston, has shown to be easily done; establishments for the care of foundling and deserted infants, the prevention of pauperism by furnishing the poor with employment, etc. On some of these matters you have

heard or will hear others speak. You will also have the pleasure of listening this afternoon to a gentleman, the worthy son of a most honored father, Dr. Gallaudet, of Washington, who has devoted himself for years to the higher instruction of deaf mutes, as his father, Dr. Gallaudet, of Hartford, did, sixty years ago, to their primary instruction. And in this connection permit me to say that one of the humbler and most neglected tasks of social science, the accurate enumeration of defective classes, like the deaf mutes, the insane, etc., has been carried on from time to time by some of our members. Dr. Jarvis, of Massachusetts; Mr. F. H. Wines, of Illinois, and others, have made a special enumeration of the insane in particular localities; and I have myself undertaken to do so in regard to the deaf mutes of Massachusetts. The United States census of 1870 gives the number of this class as only 538 in that State; but I hold in my hand a list giving the names, residences, and ages of more than 1,100, which has been verified by the town clerks and other well-informed persons in more than 200 cities and towns. Nor is there any reason to doubt that the actual number now residing in Massachusetts is at least 1,300. It is very desirable that special enumerations akin to these should be made in other States, and I believe it has been done, with a like result, in New Jersey and perhaps elsewhere.

In other directions there is much to be done. In improving education, from the ragged school and the half-time class to the most ambitious university course, and especially in providing for better education in art and in the handicrafts, a wide field is opened, and our Association has begun to cultivate it. In the reform of laws and the more systematic study of jurisprudence, in the teaching of elementary principles of finance, in the establishment of an honest and intelligent civil service, both in the National and the State governments; in the movement to give full occupation to the aspirations and capacities of women, in the invention and extension of life-saving and labor-saving machinery, and the application of science to our whole social condition, there is scope enough, not only for our members, counted by hundreds, but for the hundreds of thousands whom the Christian Association, in whose hall we meet, rallies and trains in all parts of the country for its noble and beneficent tasks. In emulation of these young workers, who have put forth branches in all the States, our Association has lately provided a plan by which its work can be localized, and at the same time centralized.

We already have branch associations in Philadelphia, New Haven, Detroit, St. Louis, and San Francisco, and others are forming in Wisconsin, Iowa, Texas, and other States. The Vice-President of the Michigan Association, Judge Brown, of Detroit, will have something to say concerning this subject.

In this infinite variety of need and opportunity for research and for practical work, the special place of the American Social Science Association is that of uniting all and communicating with all who may be willing to do so. It does not assume to direct, scarcely to advise or recommend, but to bring those who are striving for the same end into friendly relations with each other, and to furnish a common centre from which influence may radiate, and in which union may be found. Our methods are simple: the holding of meetings like this, or of smaller department meetings, the publication of a journal, the distribution of our own publications and those of other organizations, and the maintenance of correspondence with all parts of the civilized world. Our conditions of membership are also simple, the payment of an annual fee of five dollars being the pecuniary condition. It is our hope to enroll many new members among those who have attended our sessions, or read the admirable reports of them in the daily newspapers.

I notice that one of these journals speaks of a social science meeting like this as "a clumsy contrivance." So it is; but even a journalist may well remind himself that we live in a fallible and imperfect world — we "have this treasure in earthen vessels." It has been asserted on the best English authority, that "the times are out of joint;" there are spots on the sun, and old Alphonso of Castile declared that if he had been consulted at the time, he could have given some useful hints to the Maker of the World. A Persian poet, who, if living in our day, would have been an editor, went further and offered to "break up the tiresome roof of heaven into new forms." We are not so aspiring; we are a little old-fashioned, in fact. What has been good enough for the world in the last 3,000 years — this clumsy contrivance of public addresses and debates — has hitherto been good enough for us. Like our forefathers, the early settlers of New England, who resolved thus, "That we will govern our plantations by the law of God until we have time to frame a better for ourselves," we are likely for some years to go on as we have begun. But we are open to conviction, and welcome advice from all sources; partly because we are giving so much, and it is but fair play to take our own coin at our own counter.

But the subjects which interest us, members of the Association, may well recall me to more serious thoughts. They relate to the highest concerns of mankind, or to those sufferings of humanity which appeal to our deepest compassion. In the tragedy lately enacted along the banks of a quiet stream in my own State, we may see not only the all-dispensing hand of Heaven, whose decrees are unchangeable, but the penalty of human carelessness and incapacity visited, as the law of God determines, upon the innocent as well as the culpable. Out of their calamity the dwellers of the Mill River Valley mutely appeal to the students of

social science for the prevention of such misfortunes to other communities. "May the gods forbid," said the poor man to the ancient king, "that your fortune should ever be such as to make your knowledge of these matters greater than mine." And it is for the service of men that science exists. The father of modern science, in a passage where the magnificence of the language contrasts nobly with the pious humility of the thought, has given utterance to this sentiment and to a higher sentiment.

"For men have entered into a desire of learning and science," says Lord Bacon, "sometimes for ornament and reputation, and sometimes to enable them for victory of wit and contradiction, and most times for lucre and profession; as if there were sought in knowledge a couch whereupon rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a shop for profit or sale, and not to a rich store-house for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate. But evermore it must be remembered that the least part of knowledge passed to man by this so large a charter from God must be subject to that use for which God hath granted it." Unless social science works in this humble and religious spirit, all its labors are vain.

AMERICAN SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

THE AMERICAN SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION was organized in the fall of 1865, after the model of the British Association for the Promotion of Social Science. The objects of the Association are : —

To aid the development of Social Science, and to guide the public mind to the best practical means of promoting the Amendment of Laws, the Advancement of Education, the Prevention and Repression of Crime, the Reformation of Criminals, the Furtherance of Public Morality, the Adoption of Sanitary Regulations, and the Diffusion of Sound Principles on Questions of Economy, Trade, and Finance.

To bring together the various societies and individuals now interested in these objects, for the purpose of obtaining, by discussion, the real elements of Truth, by which doubts are removed, conflicting opinions harmonized, and a common ground afforded for treating wisely the social problems of our times.

The labors of the Association are carried on in four Departments : —

I. Education.
II. Public Health.
III. Economy, Trade, and Finance.
IV. Jurisprudence and the Amendment of Laws.

Each Department is under the direction of professionally qualified members.

General Meetings, at which papers, bearing upon all Departments, will be read, as well as Special Meetings, relating to the separate Departments, are held regularly in different parts of the country. The information elicited at these meetings is published, and acted upon, as far as practicable, by intervention with Executive, Legislative, and Municipal Authorities, Boards of Education, Health, and Charity, etc., etc.

The Science of Society stands, from its very nature, more than any other, in need of associated labor. Its aim being the promotion of human welfare by ascertaining the natural laws, whose application will insure the greatest human happiness, reflecting men and women must be brought together for a regular exchange of thought and information. In order to facilitate this commerce of minds, a Central Bureau has been opened in Boston, and a salaried officer placed in charge of it, who is giving his whole time and attention to the work of the Association.

The experience of five years has fully convinced the members of the Association that it was not instituted a moment too soon in this preëminently progressive country, whose very intense vitality and rapid development call for safe guidance by Right and Truth. It is this firm conviction that leads us to ask anew the coöperation of all engaged in Law, Medicine, Education, Commerce, and Finance, and of the friends of human progress in general.

The Annual Subscription is Five Dollars. All the publications of the Association, including the "Journal of Social Science," are furnished gratuitously to members.

Letters should be addressed to the Office of the Association, 5 Pemberton Square, Boston.

F. B. SANBORN, *Secretary.* GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, *President.*

21377

END OF
TITLE